

CNL ONLINE
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Dear CNL Cyberspace Patrons (and Friends):

Our QUOTE FOR THE DAY:

from Alfred C. Korzybski - -

"We all stand on dead men's shoulders."

Reference: CNL page 252

CNL NEWS:

Our special thanks to everyone associated with the two awards recently received by ye Editor - -

- (1) NLG Award - The Colonial Newsletter - Extraordinary Merit.
- (2) CNL Patrons Plaque - In Recognition of Exceptional Service as Editor on the Occasion of CNL 100.

Also - Our question in CNL ONLINE No. 3 "Can anyone out there accurately fill in the blanks?" regarding the photograph of Walter Breen which appeared in CNL-100, has received zero responses. Surely someone can figure out the location and date from the partial information that appeared on Walter's convention badge.

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C4 NEWS:

THE FIRST C-4 CONVENTION; A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE
from Roger A. Moore M.D. (74163.1557@compuserve.com)

The first annual convention of the Colonial Coin Collector's Club occurred in Pennsauken, New Jersey on October 19-21 at the South Jersey Expo Center. Anticipation for this convention had been building for over six months after John Griffie shocked the New Jersey colonial collecting community by announcing his intention of placing his colonial collection on the auction block. Three weeks prior to the convention all EAC and C-4 members received an early Christmas present in the form of a wonderfully illustrated and described catalog from McCawley-Grellman. This will no doubt become a classic catalog which will be referred to for many years to come. Of interest I only heard two negative comments about the catalog (1) that the photographs did not do the coins justice and (2) that the photographs made the coins look too good!!! Obviously a contradiction in viewpoints which only underlines the need for personal inspection of any coin prior to active bidding.

Festivities started off Thursday night, October 19, with an informal gathering of colonial copper fanatics in the hotel room of Greg Ruby, who is to be commended for his efforts in organizing the convention. Copies of a special catalog - the Midnight Sale - were distributed to people who had attended the Walter Breen extravaganza, and Walter's personal copy was donated to the C-4 auction. It was great to be able to socially interact with all the major

dealers (Tom Rinaldo, Mike Ringo, Don Mituzas, Tony Terranova, Richard August, etc., etc., etc.) and collectors (I met two fellow physician collectors - Jim Rosen and Angel Pietri), though even during these festivities tension was beginning to build in anticipation of the auction. John Griffiee kindly signed personalized notes in the auction catalogs for anyone asking him. I think I detected a note of sorrow in John, but his enthusiasm for acquiring more Saint Patrick farthings, thereby making him the undisputed leader in this understudied coinage, and hid any misgivings over the coming loss of his precious family of New Jersey coppers.

Friday was a busy day of viewing the incredible numbers of high quality coins being enticingly displayed both on the main bourse as well as in the C-4 section. Despite everyone trying to conserve their cash reserves for the auction, quite a number of coins changed hands. Chris Young will have my eternal envy for the gorgeous New Jersey 70-x he picked up!!! Many of us volunteered to assist with lot viewing and I was able to pass a very pleasant afternoon with Mike Wierzba (Dennis' son) and Bijan Anvar (who I had never met but had "conversed" with on Compuserve coin forums). What a neat way to be able to see a lot of great coins close up and rub elbows with other dedicated colonial coin collectors, such as Dan Freidus and Steve Tanenbaum!!!

The real jewel for me was Friday night - the great students of New Jersey coppers (Dennis Wierzba, Ray Williams, John Lorenzo and Bill Anton, Jr.) put on the Third New Jersey Copper Symposium. The amount of effort (love?) infused into this endeavor by these individuals is incalculable. John Lorenzo shared with us his views on the unreliability of die punch evidence in making decisions about mint sites. I must say his talk generated some impassioned discussion which left all of us richer in knowledge and viewpoint. This was followed by John Griffiee handing out a variety of "limited edition" and personally signed information sheets on his coins to be auctioned (the pre-auction tension was tightened another cinch). Then Ray Williams presented each attendee with a copy of Walter Breen's unpublished manuscript from 1955 on New Jersey Coppers. I cannot use enough adjectives to describe what a monumental and fantastic undertaking this was for Ray. Using an almost unreadable Xerox, Ray deciphered this manuscript word for word. The result is a truly valuable piece of New Jersey Copper history. Bill Anton emphasized the value of this document by calling it a gold mine of information. I still haven't made it all the way through this 88 page document. THANK YOU, RAY!!!

The last, but not least, event of the night was a die state presentation for a variety of New Jersey coins by Tom Madigan. Members of the audience brought their coins up to Tom so he could enlarge and project them on a screen for discussion. I found out that I have the earliest known die state for the Maris 21-0 variety!!! In addition everyone benefited from the incredible knowledge and insights provided by Bill Anton during the discussions of specific varieties. By the way, Tom was selling his loose leaf book on die states of New Jerseys, and I got my copy autographed.

Saturday brought more buying, selling and trading, as well as promises to buy, if any money was left after the auction. In addition a variety of educational programs were available. Bob Martin gave a talk about finding the original photographic plates from the 1975 EAC auction. Jim Goudge explored the complex world of Connecticut coppers, which complimented his incredible exhibit of these coins. Finally, David Manchell both displayed and lectured on the Betts medals just before everyone rushed home through the heavy rain to get a nap before the auction.

Finally, 7:30 PM arrived!!! Almost a hundred crazed colonial collectors crowded into a small room and sat on some of the most uncomfortable chairs in existence. However, for the next four hours few people left their seats - except for one poor bidder whose chair collapsed under him in the heat of trying to obtain a coin. Bidding was strong for almost all of the 600+ lots. The good news for John Griffiee was that bidding was especially heavy and exceptional prices were realized for many of his New Jerseys. The bad news was that I was one of the active bidders on a number of these coins. The good news is I got some of the coins I wanted. The bad news is I have to figure out some way to tell my wife!!!!!! Oh well, the meeting, the auction, the friendships, the lectures, the books, the handouts - it all added up into one great send off for the first C-4 convention. So, if I start saving my money now, by this time next year when the C-4 Convention occurs

COAC NEWS:

ANS/Coinage of the Americas Conference - October 28, 1995
from Neil Rothschild (74776.375@compuserve.com)

The conference followed a fast pace, and I took notes as best I could, particularly in my areas of interest (counterfeit and Connecticut Coppers). I have included certain detailed data presented on slides and overhead transparencies. I apologize in advance for any inaccuracies. I would have been nice if the presenters had handed out copies of this data; they can fly through it much quicker than my fingers can scribble. In any event, here are my notes:

1. Introduction by Dr. Philip L. Mossman.

Phil presented a summary of the economic and political environment from the middle 18th century to the confederation period; this was a brief summary of much of the information contained in his book, originally published as CNL Issue Number 74.

During the pre-Revolutionary war period, the colonies were very loosely tied together, being physically isolated. Many people lived their entire lives within a 20 mile radius, sea travel being expensive and surface travel over whatever roads existed was difficult and dangerous.

In 1763, England emerged from war as a pre-eminent power, but deeply in debt. England clamped down on many of the old laws, and maintained a large standing army in the colonies. England attempted to extract whatever resources it could from the colonies to help pay the war debts.

By 1776, most royal authority was gone, and the colonies were in open rebellion. This was followed by the outbreak of war and the eventual surrender of the British at Yorktown.

In 1781, the Articles of Confederation were ratified, allowing the states to create paper and specie currency. While the states created a substantial amount of paper money, a substantial amount of hard money was initially circulated by foreign troops (payroll).

By 1784, the country was mired in a depression as deep and serious as the downturn of the 1930's. Most hard money had left circulation. Many returning veterans had never been paid, yet faced large tax bills that had to be paid in hard money. The result was Shay's rebellion, which woke up the country's leaders to the seriousness of the problem. These events spurred the creation and ratification of the present Constitution.

Accounting books were kept in "Money's of Account", an imaginary system of book keeping that was required to reconcile and convert currency transactions from one colony (or state) to another. Each colony/state maintained its own Money's of Account. (Several contemporary conversion charts were presented in evidence). Eric Newman's paper presented in COAC #1 was cited.

2. Dr. Charles W. Smith, George III Counterfeit Halfpence Series.

Dr. Smith presented conclusions from a study of 6 or 7 populations of counterfeit half pence. Desiring a "normal" population to study, he visited a number of coin shops in England, purchasing all or none of their counterfeit inventory. He felt that established collections were biased, since they are assembled with various strategies in mind. As I recall, this study encompassed about 600 coins.

He studied the weight and variety distribution (rarity) of these populations and presented a number of conclusions in chart form; the following data summarizes a few key charts.

a) Year date rarity ratings. He found that each of the 6 or 7 groups of coins contained approximately similar populations by date. A representative population sampling (from the first group on the chart) is as follows; again the other populations lead to the same relative rarity conclusions:

1770 = 1.3%

1771 = 4.3%
1772 = 3.3%
1773 = 18.3%
1774 = 17.0%
1775 = 55.7%

Dr. Smith believes that the annual production level was relatively constant, but that the 1775 series was produced for a number of years subsequent to the cessation of regal copper coinage, resulting in the large population. He also believes that the reason that many 1775's contain a '5' cut to look similar to a 6 (curving, slated top bar of 5, etc.) is that the counterfeiters were hedging their bets as to the availability of regal 1776 coinage.

He examined 300 error coins, and broke them down into the following populations:

Double strikes - 39%
Brockages - 29%
10% - incomplete blanks
6% - off center strikes
16% - all other errors

Of the brockages, 63% were reverse brockages, and 37% obverse. 90% were full brockages, off-centered brockages being very rare. He believes that most presses were set up with the obverse in the upper die, and most brockages occurred when a coin became stuck to the upper die, being hidden from view of the press operators. This would account for the preponderance of reverse brockages.

He also mentioned the 1771 variety with 2 reverse dies.

b) Non-regal dates. The following data represents the relative population of non-regal dates relative to the 1770 (the scarcest regal date), i.e. 100% being as common as 1770, and 10% being 1/10th as common as 1770.

75% - 1781
50% - 1776
25% - 1777
10% - 1785 and 1794
Less than 10% - 1741, 1747, 1761, 1751, 1760

He references Eric Newman's work in Museum Notes #33 indicating that the 1785 series was most likely produced for American consumption only; there being no evidence of English circulation.

Dr. Smith presented the 1797 mail coach token under type (See C4/Griffie lot 580) example of a 1770's era counterfeit to suggest that production of these coins continued at least until 1797.

c) Weights. I could not transcribe all of these charts, but the gist of the discussion is that his analysis of these populations by weight indicates 2 major discoveries; 1) the average weight of the regal date issues declined with each issue year, and 2) that although many issues were short weight, the standard deviation of the weights was as narrow as similar studies of regal coinage, indicating that the planchet production technology of the counterfeiters was at least on a par with the royal mint. This contrasts with many previous claims that most of the counterfeiting was crude and amateurish work. He also found a correlation of weight verses diameter.

He also studied the non-circularity of the planchets in an attempt to determine the level of annealing technology employed. He found that these characteristics were similar to Royal Mint products.

d) Metal Hypothesis. (Was the volume of the melt increased by scrap metal?). He finds that the composition of regal and counterfeit coppers is very similar. In addition, he reviewed a variety of potential filler metals (Iron, lead, bronze, brass, tin) and concludes that none of these metals were available at the time, cheaper than copper, or physically capable of mixing into a copper alloy. In other words, he believes that the counterfeiters did not have an opportunity to cut their metal stock with inferior metals.

The melting point of iron is too high (1540 c, vs 1150 c for copper)

Bronze was too expensive

Brass was not available

Tin was too expensive and as hard as the die steel

Lead is brittle, can't be rolled. Lead melts at 350 degrees (Fahrenheit?) and would not mix properly.

Dr. Smith concluded with some remarks concerning the occurrence of these coppers in America, by date. Unfortunately, my notes are weak on this topic. He indicates that the proportion of counterfeit to regal copper in Britain was 8:1, whereas in America he believes it to be 6:1.

3. Dr. John Kleeberg, The wreck of the Faithful Stewart.

John discussed and presented slides of various coins found off the Indian River Inlet, Indian River, Delaware. After the inlet was dredged a large number of copper coins were found on beaches adjacent to the Indian River Inlet. By a process of elimination, he believes the coins came from the Faithful Stewart. Among the coins were Irish coppers. Also found was a Voce Populi. He discussed the Irish migration to America in the 1790's following the potato famine. Most of the coins found are in a very low state of preservation, due to 200 years of immersion in sea water.

I found his talk to be of particular interest to me, as I have dived and photographed a number of wrecks off of the Indian River Inlet. I have never

found a coin, although I have to admit that I have never seriously looked for coins. I can say that there are a large number of wrecks off of Indian River; wooden schooners of anonymous identity and many unidentified wrecks piled up on the Fenwick shoals, a shallow area 10 miles or so off the Inlet. There are literally wrecks piled up on top of wrecks. Most of the wrecks date from the mid 1800's and earlier. Most have been demolished by the wave action, with only a few wooden ribs or metal parts left.

4. Eric P. Newman, The NOVAS

Eric presented evidence on both sides of the dispute regarding the correct pronunciation of the Nova's: Nova Constellatio or Constellation Nova.

He indicates that a study of the existing patterns favors Nova Constellatio, based on the placement and punctuation. He presented slides of these examples, which will hopefully be reproduced in the proceedings. He also references Latin grammar and the Brasher Doubloon as evidence. An article in the London Chronicle references Nova Constellatio, yet other contemporary references use the form Constellatio Nova.

Eric believes that, based on the evidence, the term "Nova Constellatio" is correct.

He then entered a discussion of the term "40", presenting contemporary evidence that the term indicates "many", rather than a specific number.

He presented evidence that the series was produced in Birmingham, England; the London Chronicle, as well as similarities to the Georgius Triumpho and "ISLES" evasion pieces.

Eric entered into a discussion of Vermont landscapes, Nova Eboracs, and Immune Columbia, but my notes are insufficient to reproduce a coherent dialog.

5. Pete Smith, The Independent State of Vermont

Pete was not present, but had forwarded a copy of his paper to be read aloud. It was decided to forego his presentation in the interest of time.

6. John Lorenzo, The Atlee Broken A punch.

John firmly believes that the preponderance of broken A punches among numerous colonial series do not point to Atlee. He believes that the broken A originated from a defective master die (matrix) that produced a number of A punches that deteriorated in a similar manner. John's studies of punch linking lead to a

conclusion that punch linking, in itself, cannot prove conclusively the origin of a die.

John launched into a discussion of the N and P punches to help buttress his conclusions. He handed out 3 pages of notes.

7. James A. Goudge, The Copper Coinage of Connecticut

Jim presented a series of slides on the 1785 obverse 7, with the following attribution data:

7.1 - always massive swelling on the obverse. No periods. Fields swelling from die sinking process. Die break from mail to A. Also at right foot of A.

7.2 - Massive die break at effigies neck. Same obverse as 1785 14.2-R and 14.2-S

7.3 - New obverse, see CNL 1973. The differences between 7.1 and 7.3 have never been plated. No cracks and no swelling this variety.

Jim indicates that all obverse 7 dies were produced from a complete working hub, resulting in identical devices, legends, and punctuation.

Jim presented the following information on the 1786 obverse 5:

5.1 - Each upright in legend has bifurcated serifs. Differences in wreath and base of mail- hand strengthened.

5.5 - Letters bifurcated

5.7 - Letters bifurcated. Colons by hand. Same hub as obverse 4.

5.10 - Last of this hub series with bifurcated legends.

33.6 - Only the central device is hubbed. Triple ribbon variety (in comparison to the other dies discussed with complete hubbing).

5.3 - Hercules (is it same as 1787 7-R ?) See Miller's description. Breen says same hub. Jim says different hubs- bases not bifurcated. Spacing of letters different. Jim displayed obverse plates side by side to demonstrate his conclusion.

5.3 and 5.10 - The C is 2.5mm distant from head on 5.3; 1.5mm distant on the 5.10

Jim then launched into a discussion of the die states of the 1.2 mutttonhead obverse.

He reports 4 die states of the 1.2 obverse:

1. Married to C reverse. Legends are complete. See Stacks/Picker:127 and 128. There indicated that the first die state was cut shallow, then strengthened. Jim believes this is wrong, and lot 128 is this die state. Breen indicates 3 die states.
2. AUCTORI - right side of O and O in CONN is ground down. Lapping also removes top of head.
3. Almost all letters are gone. Tops of AUC C,O,E of CONNEC gone. Base of mail lapped down.
4. Right side of A, a bit of C, bit of TR (?) show, rest of legends gone. Top of head gone.

Three die states of reverse C:

1. Perfect; full date and legends.
2. Portions of letters ground off, bottoms of date gone.
3. Entire date gone. Most of all letters are gone. Portion of shield removed.

He reports the following die state marriages:

Obv1/Rev1
Obv2/Rev1
Obv3/Rev2
Obv3/Rev2 (???-had a problem with my notes here)
Obv4/Rev3 (all on smaller diameter planchets)

He referenced CNL#39; The JCS discussion of Hubs.

Well at this point I was too stuffed full of new knowledge to continue note taking...
